

COIN in Peace-building

Case Study of the 2009 Malakand Operation

BY NADEEM AHMED

Since 2007, Islamic militants and law enforcement agencies have remained locked in a sporadic tussle for control in the Malakand Division of Pakistan.¹ The division is located in the northern part of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province and borders the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). It consists of the districts of Upper Dir, Lower Dir, Swat, Shangla, and Buner. An increased influx of radical elements from across the border and from other parts of the country resulted in the strengthening of informal miscreants' networks and fundamentalist actors, ultimately resulting in the creation of a parallel state structure. Rapprochement and efforts of reconciliation between these groups and Pakistan government authorities continued for nearly 2 years, resulting in the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation of 2009,² which conceded to the demand for the implementation of Sharia law in the entire division. However, within the space of 1 month, a failure on the part of the Islamist groups to maintain their end of the bargain, and their growing expansionary tendencies, resulted in the government deciding to intervene, using the army to conduct a rapid law enforcement operation with the goal of reestablishing the writ of formal state institutions.

This article looks at the genesis of the crisis and the successful enforcement operation carried out by the Pakistan government, specifically with a view to understanding how a complex emergency was handled through well-coordinated application of the military instrument while simultaneously catering for emerging humanitarian needs of the affected population. The larger theoretical theme is how counterinsurgency (COIN) operations contribute to long-term peace-building. After an initial discussion of the various aspects of the 3-month Operation *Rah-i-Rast* ("The Righteous Way"), this

Lieutenant General Nadeem Ahmed, Pakistan Army (Ret.), was Head of the Special Support Group and was responsible for managing coordination of all stakeholders in the 2009 Malakand Operation preconflict, conflict, and postconflict phases.

article outlines the strategic vision offered by the government of Pakistan, focusing on recommendations to reinstitute peace and rule of law in the volatile regions of the country.

Genesis of the Crisis

The crisis, which required a coordinated, precise, and speedy intervention on the part of the armed forces, emerged against the backdrop of several factors. To understand the context of the law enforcement operation, it is important to delineate the factors that led to a deterioration of law and order in the Malakand Division and its adjoining areas.

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An ever-increasing population vis-à-vis growing resource scarcity, degradation of basic social service delivery, and poor governance by the state were some of the primary reasons for the discontent within the masses that led to an influx of nonstate actors and the creation of parallel informal structures. With growing political expediency on the part of the provincial as well as federal government toward addressing the urgent socio-legal-economic needs of the Malakand Division, the social inequities increased rapidly over the last decade or so. The demographic youth bulge in the concerned districts, when juxtaposed with rampant unemployment in the younger population, helped convince fundamental, far-right elements to expand their ideological and political agendas.

Beyond demographic and socioeconomic factors, a history of elite-backed repressive

behavior on the part of the local law apparatus (the courts and police) further alienated the people. With the courts and the legal system in general unable to dispense cases and resolve disputes in a timely, efficient, and just manner, the institutional space became increasingly fertile for actors peddling largely falsified agendas of quick and religiously compliant justice.

Finally, the international context cannot be ignored in the situational specificity of this particular case study. Given the area's proximity to Afghanistan, and a history of cross-border engagement between nonstate actors on both sides, U.S./North Atlantic Treaty Organization intervention, with the support of the government of Pakistan, led to an increase in anti-American and antistate sentiment. Painted in increasingly zero-sum terms, the issue of jihad against the allied forces and those who assisted them was disseminated through multiple media.

The genesis of this particular crisis was the gradual conjoining of these factors and contingencies. The creation of a toxic political situation and the exhaustion of other mitigating measures and solutions left the government with little option but to intervene through a rapid law enforcement operation.

Preoperation Situation

With the writ of the government, and specifically the social service capacity, ultimately ceasing to exist, Swat and neighboring areas became a safe haven for 8,000–10,000 militants. These militants had trickled over the border the last few years and were given shelter and an enabling environment by fundamentalists already based in the region. During the course of this period, with the implementation and ultimate failure of the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation (based on Islamic laws), government functionaries and local law enforcement

Destroyed house is backdrop for 8-year-old Amreen washing dishes in rainwater, evidence of severe flooding that affected northwest Pakistan



UN Photo/UNICEF/ZAK

officials started to leave the districts, ceding further space to the militants. Exploiting local media, militants began to expand their reach both within Swat District and neighboring areas. Once they established strongholds, they conducted public beheadings and other such tactics to instill fear and force compliance from the populace. Swat thus emerged as the miscreants' center of gravity.³

Shaping the Environment

Once the decision was made by the Pakistan government to use the military to establish the writ of the state, the biggest challenge was to generate a supportive environment with the public at large, and to institutionalize political ownership of the operation. One step that swayed the popular sentiment in favor of use of the military was that the government had given "peace a chance" by acceding to the "introduction of the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation," which did not stop the miscreants from furthering their agenda and flouting the agreement. Media support was garnered through both extensive public relation exercises and large-scale dissemination of information about the repressive activities of the terrorists. A successful media and public relations campaign allowed the currying of public support in a relatively short time and political ownership was instituted by the democratic government, which took all major political parties in the country on board.⁴

The strategic preparations for the operation required intensive training of the army to conduct counterinsurgency operations in hilly terrain. In tandem with training, intelligence-gathering was also stepped up during March and April to provide the latest target information, along with a discreet build-up of troops to their respective launch pads.

Most relevant to our perspective on the issue, the government with support from key stakeholders set out to expand existing humanitarian response capacities, specifically in those areas that would house displaced populations. The government simultaneously initiated work on developing postconflict sustainable crisis recovery strategies.

The desired goal of the intervention was "to re-establish writ of the State and ensure security through application of military instruments, thereby creating conditions conducive for political and administrative machinery to bring sustained peace and stability to Swat and neighboring areas."

Military Aspects

At a basic level, military strategy revolved around the elimination of operational command and control structures to disrupt the militants' operations and ensure their isolation from the public at large. Displacement of the population in those areas where the operation was under way was facilitated with a view to providing sufficient liberty of action to the military to conduct operations without fear of causing collateral damage. At the peak of its intensity, the size of the displaced population was around 3 million. Many were accommodated in nearby districts, but others went as far south as Karachi to stay with relatives.

Through a combination of air support, tanks, and indirect-firing weapons, the operation was conducted on a sustained day and night basis. Where possible, encirclement (including vertical) of militant hideouts and strongholds was carried out, while extra effort was made to reduce dependence on roads and pathways to avoid improvised explosive devices and booby traps.

Perhaps the most crucial aspect of the strategy was the concept of expanding influence

zones, while applying clear and hold tactics in areas where operations were conducted. As opposed to cases where militaries clear areas and then move the offensive forward to leave a vacuum, the Pakistan army decided to maintain a permanent presence in all cleared parts to keep logistics routes clear, enhance public support, and improve intelligence-gathering.

The 2009 Malakand Operation⁵ remains the largest counterinsurgency undertaking in the country's history, using approximately three army divisions to cover four districts. Operating on three axes, converging inward, compressing spaces (thereby denying liberty for the miscreants to operate freely), and blocking all possible ingress/egress routes to contain the miscreants, the army was able to defeat them in detail within 3½ months. The operation was also the largest aviation-borne intervention in South Asian history; an entire brigade of special forces was lifted by helicopters onto Piochar (the headquarters of miscreants) and maintained by helicopters till the miscreants were eliminated from the area. At the end of the operation, collateral damage was minimal, having been limited to 1.11 percent to property and 0.11 percent to life.⁶

The operation was successful in reestablishing the writ of the state in Malakand Division. The relatively short time-span, and the deftness with which the armed forces managed to deal with the militants, provided a major psychological boost to the entire country in the larger struggle against terrorism and militancy. Over the last year and a half, the security situation has been stable, public confidence has been restored, and community-based village defense committees have been strengthened and mobilized to ensure that extremist elements do not stage a comeback. With displaced populations returned to their areas of origin, the continuing

challenge is to certify that the confidence of the citizenry remains restored. For this particular purpose, specifically in the aftermath of the operation, the humanitarian community has firmly established itself in the Malakand region and is now complementing the state's ability to deliver basic social services. In terms of economic recovery, Swat has seen a slow but solid revival of tourism as well, which is crucial for the region. Some of the long-term reforms have been introduced, but a great deal more needs to be done. The march toward full normalcy was

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somewhat interrupted due to the massive floods of 2010, which destroyed extensive infrastructure and livelihoods.

Humanitarian Aspects

In a complex emergency such as the one under discussion, the desired end results could only have been obtained if there was a multi-faceted response. In such cases, the military component of the operation alone cannot deliver the requisite objectives, and it has to complement the larger humanitarian intervention required for the well-being of the affected population. In this particular case study, the most immediate humanitarian requirement was to cater to more than 3 million displaced persons. These large-scale displacements were facilitated by institutional systems specifically put in place to handle the movement of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) to relief

providing zones (RPZs) that were set up in carefully chosen locations.

The major criterion in establishing the RPZs was close proximity to the operation area. Hence, the neighboring districts of Mardan, Charsadda, Nowshera, Swabi

reluctance in the humanitarian community to work with the military was resolved by adhering to internationally accepted principles of humanitarian response

Peshawar, and districts farther south such as Tank and Dera Ismail Khan were selected, and adequate management structures were set up to deal with the IDPs. A significant challenge, apart from the facilitation and assistance to people in the RPZs, was to sustain and assist people who remained in the operation area. Psychosocial impacts of armed intervention such as sustained trauma, along with a modicum of collateral damage, produced a potentially volatile situation. The government saw that as a major challenge. It was therefore thought prudent that the same military conducting the law enforcement operations must also be actively involved in the humanitarian aspects, and more so in the conflict zone where the humanitarian community had no presence.

Secondly, the problem of unstructured reverse migration was challenging primarily because the armed forces required some amount of time before an area could be declared completely safe and ready for return. People, in a bid to restart their lives and recover their livelihoods, would often migrate back from the RPZs well before these areas had been recovered, exposing themselves to the dangers of the

operation. Finally, the geographical expansion of the operation to adjoining areas progressively increased the caseload for humanitarian response. Initially planned with a figure of around 2.4 million, the final affected population count was more than 3 million.

At a secondary level, maintaining security in the RPZs was a significant challenge. To ensure that militants did not infiltrate relief camps, the provision of security, intelligence, and relief apparatus had to be coordinated in all designated areas. On several occasions, specifically in Mardan and Charsadda, there were reports of terrorist movements from operational areas into the RPZs, but thankfully, timely interventions and close monitoring ensured that no untoward incidents took place. At a humanitarian response level, the large amounts of philanthropic support coming in from citizens in Pakistan as well as abroad needed to be channeled and demarcated according to the requirements of each RPZ and operation area. To ensure judicious and equitable distribution of relief items, an efficient and transparent registration mechanism was established for the IDPs, and a complementary grievance redressal system was put into place. Also, there was reluctance in the humanitarian community to work with the military in a complex emergency. That was resolved by adhering to internationally accepted principles of humanitarian response.

Institutional Arrangement

The complex nature of the emergency required the presence of a coordinating body that could, on one hand, deal with the humanitarian community working in the response effort, and on the other, with the armed forces carrying out the intervention. In the absence of any such preordained institution, and owing to the lack of capacity of any existing disaster

response unit, the government of Pakistan established the Special Support Group (SSG), a federal-level body responsible for coordination among multiple stakeholders. The SSG was constituted by the prime minister of Pakistan in consultation with the army chief through an official notification, which was read by the prime minister in the parliament before issuing.

Summarily speaking, the SSG was to liaise with the following actors:

- ❖ federal government ministries and agencies, such as Prime Minister's Secretariat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Economic Affairs Division, Ministry of Interior, Civil Aviation Authority, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
- ❖ provincial government departments and agencies (Health, Housing, Communication and Works, Civil Defense, Revenue, and so forth)
- ❖ army
- ❖ humanitarian community (the United Nations and nongovernmental organizations)⁷
- ❖ donors
- ❖ displaced communities and local communities in RPZs.

To give it the requisite authority and stature to interact with the various stakeholders, a three-star corps commander was put in charge of the SSG and had all the assets of the corps to include health, transport, food, water, security, logistics, and facilitation at his command. Cumulatively, a brigade-plus size body of troops from various services was deployed to manage the complete spectrum of management and return of the IDPs.

Salient Features of Response

The existence of multiple complexities and the relatively short time span in a response effort of this nature results in the activity spectrum being slightly different from what is normally seen in a disaster response. The management of the displaced population, as step one of the effort, was closely followed by the facilitation and management of returns, all within a 3-month period. People were moved back to their places of origin in tandem with early recovery activities in the affected areas and included the simultaneous rehabilitation and provision of basic services to the returnees. Closely following the recovery phase, small-scale reconstruction and rehabilitation, mostly community driven, was initiated. So, broadly speaking, the various aspects of the activity spectrum were concurrent and overlapping, depending upon the stability of the security situation in a particular area.

The successful coordination and response mechanisms established during the emergency were able to provide a host of services to meet the needs of the affected population. First and foremost, the registration requirement for the IDPs was met through the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and Provincial Social Welfare Department, which was later verified through the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA). This was essential to avoid duplication and waste. NADRA also issued national identification cards to the people who had lost them or never got them in the first place. Shelter and nonfood items were handed out on a household basis. Relief camps were set up in various locations within the designated RPZs. Additionally, a great number of IDPs chose to stay with host families. Food, health care, water, sanitation, and hygiene arrangements were made for both categories.

AHMED

A cash grant of 25,000 Pakistani rupees (U.S. \$325) was also distributed to each of more than 400,000 households through Visa debit cards (introduced for the first time to provide financial assistance to those affected).

In the second phase, transportation for returning and commuting purposes and education facilities for children in RPZs were also provided. Alternate banking arrangements for receiving funds from relatives and the authorities were also initiated. To deal with the psychosocial impact of the emergency, trauma

return was totally voluntary; if someone did not want to go, his or her relief assistance was continued

management centers were established in all RPZs. Finally, a returns package and vocational training facilities for those people who were economically vulnerable were also delivered.

The return policy was premised on four basic principles: informed, voluntary, safe, and assisted. All potential returnees were provided with full information about the security situation and availability of basic services in the area of return to enable an informed choice whether they wanted to return sooner or later. Second, it was totally voluntary; if someone did not want to go, his or her relief assistance was continued, and there was no forced return. Third, the SSG in coordination with the army and civil law enforcement agencies ensured that the route and area of return were cleared of the miscreants and unexploded munitions. Fourth and finally, their return was assisted, which implied free transportation, food and non-food items, medicines, and hard cash.

The basic conditions set out by the SSG for an area to be deemed fit for return

of populations included, first, the clearance of mines, booby traps, improvised explosive devices, and unexploded bombs by the military. Second, roads and pathways had to be cleared of debris. Third, some basic infrastructure—such as government services, water, sanitation facilities, and community infrastructure—had to be restored. Fourth, civil law enforcement had been reinstated and made functional. Market routes and inter- as well as intradistrict communication were restored. Finally, public representatives, including legislators, local councilors, and other notables, were asked to come back in order to incentivize and facilitate the returning population. The army had already been asked to maintain a continuous presence in the area until complete return of stability.

The return assistance package included provisions for free medical examinations and medicines, 1 month of food rations, nonfood items, free transportation, reconstruction tools for property rebuilding, and a one-time cash grant of \$325.

The reasons for the success of the operation and response effort were numerous and included unprecedented public and media support, political ownership, government resolve, sufficiency of military resources, adequate and timely training, coherent planning, organized structure of management, return of displaced people, community mobilization for local defense, extensive intelligence and monitoring activities, and the strong participation of the humanitarian community in the relief, early recovery, and reconstruction work.

Rebuilding Peace

The most vital component of the response strategy was a clear understanding that despite successful efforts and sacrifices, the military

by itself was not the ultimate solution to the problem. Under this premise, a larger vision was crafted, along with four strategic objectives catering to nine specific sectors.

A fundamental characteristic of the vision was to rectify the structural problems that led to the emergence of a crisis in the first place. Under this vision, the long-term plan is to establish peace in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and FATA region with greater responsiveness and accountability on the part of the state, well functioning legal institutions, and adequate law enforcement mechanisms. This would go hand in hand with better provision of social services such as health care, education, water and sanitation, and economic opportunities.

The process through which a holistic framework of response was formulated started through community-level consultations in the target areas to obtain a sense of ground realities, especially in terms of spatial characteristics. This was followed by wider civil society consultations and close interaction with the federal and provincial bureaucracy and law enforcement agencies as well as public representatives. Finally, a thorough literature review of previous peace-rebuilding exercises was conducted. This process resulted in the development of a crisis analysis framework. Its three components were:

- ❖ crisis manifestations: delineating reasons for the development of the situation, specific focus on administrative and systemic inefficiencies, social inequities, and unresponsive state structures
- ❖ crisis drivers: weaponization, informal legal institutions, increased militancy, and terrorist activities
- ❖ effects sought: political and judicial reform.

The framework, especially the effects-sought segment, was closely tied to the vision mentioned earlier and rested on the execution of four strategic objectives:

- ❖ build state responsiveness and effectiveness to restore citizen trust
- ❖ stimulate employment and livelihood opportunities
- ❖ ensure provision of basic services
- ❖ foster reconciliation, deradicalization, and counterextremism.

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The nine priority sectors demarcated in the response strategy were:

- ❖ good governance
- ❖ rule of law
- ❖ agriculture and natural resources
- ❖ nonfarm economic development
- ❖ education
- ❖ infrastructure
- ❖ health
- ❖ social protection
- ❖ strategic communication.

Objective 1: Restoring Citizen Trust in the State

Drivers. The articulation of this first strategic objective was driven by pervasively low levels of trust in the state at the community level. This was largely a product of poor

U.S. Army (Wayne Gray)



accountability mechanisms and nonexistent transparency in state practices. The vacuum left by nonfunctioning legal institutions, prevalence of an informal economic structure, and continued degradation and corruption of the local jirga system provided further impetus toward seeking reform and change. Finally, insufficient civic participation and political exclusion were also important drivers, especially in the tribal areas.

Findings. Upon examination of the various drivers that informed the strategizing process, it was concluded that there was an urgent priority for the government to communicate plans for a new social contract with the citizens. The first priority would be to undertake extensive legal and political reform, especially in the tribal areas. Second, improved security and access to justice were needed, as well as transparent and effective delivery of other basic services. Third, increased responsiveness of the state at the local level by encouraging community participation and civil society dialogue was required.

Recommendations. To deal with the issue of political and legal reform, it has been recommended that full citizen rights be given to the people of FATA, which would allow for a program of stronger integration into the state of Pakistan. The use of a postconflict needs assessment will be vital in drawing up a roadmap for transition, including consensus-building among the people for preferred alternatives.⁸ Second, improving security arrangements, both existing and planned, should be done with a view to increasing community-level accountability. Third, strengthening access to justice can be made possible through training systems and regimes in the judicial sector, reviewing the substance of the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation and its compliance with the constitution,

introducing audits of state institutions in the tribal areas, extending the jurisdiction of the federal ombudsman's office to include FATA, and providing investigation and prosecution support to jirga deliberations. Last, there is a need to strengthen the relationship among the state, civil society, and communities through instituting political participation, participatory planning, and monitoring of public affairs. The adoption of efficient grievance redress mechanisms is also a crucial recommendation.

Objective 2: Stimulating Employment and Livelihood Opportunities

Drivers. The demographic contingency of having a large youth population contributes to high levels of unemployment in a resource-scarce environment. Relevant to our particular case study, the economic incentives offered by militant groups outweighed the existing formal opportunities available, exacerbating the problem. In the absence of viable monitoring and regulatory institutions, the prevalence of an informal economy, driven largely by drug- and arms-trafficking, has become entrenched in the province, and the relatively unsecure nature of remittance flows coming in from other parts of the country and abroad made the local economy relatively easy for the militants to capture.

Findings. In the postoperation scenario, the highest priority was to initiate a quick revival of the agriculture and livestock sector through assistance and replacement of lost assets. An important finding was that there is a need for diversification in the local economy from subsistence agriculture to more commercialized ventures. Similarly, there was a significant skills gap in the labor pool, and existing skills being imparted were detached from market demand. The overall theme was that employment and livelihood stimulation is

required to ensure that militants can no longer use economic vulnerability to their advantage.

Recommendations. The recommendations made under this particular strategic objective cater to both agriculture- and nonagriculture-based economic activity. For the former, the most immediate recommendation was to replenish livestock, restore lost animals, provide feed and fodder, and assist in the repair of livestock sheds and poultry/dairy farms. Second, expand community-based planning, implement rural livelihoods interventions, and provide matching grants for community development schemes such as forestry. Third, use government procurement and public works to maximize local employment generation. This was specifically relevant to areas where infrastructure damage to public works had taken place. Fourth, arrange for the provision of social safety nets and the initiation of micro-credit programs, including special provisions for access by the most vulnerable segments of the population. Fifth, introduce specialized forces to prevent funding flows to militants and enable the regulation of the informal economy. This can only be done in close coordination with other provincial governments as well as the government of Afghanistan. Finally, create effective employment opportunities, with an emphasis on skilled and unskilled youth. This is a priority that can only be achieved through investment in building a private sector, upgrading productive assets, supporting entrepreneurial initiatives, and engendering sensitive business development services. Along with economic incentives, there is a need to review and restructure technical and vocational education training to align market demand with training curriculum. Also important is to provide support packages, training, and financial assistance to demobilized fighters and militants.

Objective 3: Ensuring Provision of Basic Services

Drivers. A significant part of the problem lies in the inability of the state to ensure access to basic services. This has resulted in widespread deficits between the demands of the citizenry and what they ultimately receive. Deficits in education have resulted in a shortage of qualified human resources. In the same vein, deficits in the provision of safe water and sanitation systems have resulted in deteriorating health conditions due to a dilapidated basic healthcare system. The lack of proper road networks as well as energy availability directly harms economic activity. This presence of a nonconducive environment retards economic investment and ultimately prosperity.

Findings. As a result of these drivers, it has been found that the prevalent perception is that the state does not care for the citizenry. This perception, coupled with increasing poverty, serves to exacerbate socio-political tensions and is one of the fundamental reasons why militant groups are able to present themselves as a viable alternative to existing state structures.

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Recommendations. In the postcrisis scenario, and as a first step, the excluded and vulnerable groups in society must be assisted in accessing basic services. Beyond the immediate response, the long-term strategy is based around several key points such

as provision of social safety nets, cash transfers, in-kind support, and school feeding programs. Second, provide increased access to water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructure for nearly 2.8 million people. Third, retrain state employees in relevant sectors to enable efficient delivery of basic services, specifically in the postcrisis areas. Fourth, prepare quality benchmarks and standards for service delivery in each sector. This can be done by encouraging the involvement of community-based organizations, which can in turn also take on a monitoring role. Fifth, the enhancement of capacity for law enforcement agencies is an urgent necessity for the affected areas. Adequate capacity enhancing steps can be further complemented with public awareness campaigns and civic education.

Objective 4: Countering Radicalization and Fostering Reconciliation

Drivers. Religious extremism and militancy are driven by a number of factors, all of which have a close relationship with the political and social characteristics of the region. The primary driver identified was the real and perceived exclusion of the citizenry that resulted in discrimination, cultural elitism, and the denial of access to basic services and a better life in general. This was further accentuated by the absence of enabling conditions for trust-building and dialogue, including security and safety. Furthermore, high levels of illiteracy and poor access to alternative sources of information and opinions facilitated the militant agenda of spreading a radical narrative. This narrative also used imagery and perspectives on discrimination against Muslims across the world, specifically at the hands of Western countries and their allies.

Findings. A major indicator that showed the nuanced approach of the government was recognition of the fact that the crisis could not be reduced to being premised purely on material grievances. An important finding from this particular indicator was that a durable reconciliation process requires state support to an enabling political, legal, social, and economic environment, as well as continued evidence of the government's commitment to addressing accusations of corruption, mismanagement, elite bias, and discrimination. Attitudinal and behavioral change can only be made possible after exposure to systemic alternative information and open public dialogue between the state and society.

Recommendations. Points submitted to address this objective were divided into three broad categories. The first dealt with the establishment of an alternative discourse to counter extremist religious and ideological messages. This can be done through rehabilitation of detainees by exposing them to peaceful Islamic teachings and an alternate cultural paradigm within local Pakhtun value systems. Vulnerability of the wider population can be countered by providing exposure to alternative cultural and religious viewpoints. Second, promotion of a diverse, open, and tolerant society can be achieved through plurality of information, fostering the harmonious coexistence of diverse groups, establishing a mechanism to encourage diversity in short-term public works employment and in public representation and oversight, and promoting institutions that support state enforcement of appropriate legislation to enable pluralism. Third, fostering social cohesion among and within communities can be accomplished by state support to counter exclusion, sectarianism, and other inter- and intracommunity strife.

Conclusion

The Malakand operation remains an example of a successful counterinsurgency contributing to long-term peace-building. While only a couple of years have elapsed since the target areas were cleared of militants, a long-term strategy, as articulated in the last few sections, has been put into place to deal with issues of extremism, state failure, and violence across vulnerable parts of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and FATA. With a well thought out, inclusive, and coherent strategic vision in place, the effects of a successful military intervention in the fight against terrorism can be fully actualized. What is important to remember, however, is that the process of peace-rebuilding and the creation of a better socio-political and legal environment can only be done in close coordination with the humanitarian community, local communities, and all other relevant stakeholders, including international actors.

As life gradually approaches normalcy in the intervention areas, the contribution of all stakeholders previously mentioned must be given due credit, and their efforts should be recognized. At the same time, the magnitude of the task should not be forgotten, and the long-term vision for the province and the region as a whole must always remain as the driving factor for humanitarian interventions. **PRISM**

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Notes

¹ Malakand is a division consisting of several districts: Swat, Buner, Upper Dir, Lower Dir, and Shangla. All of them saw some military action, with Swat being the center of gravity. The divisional system ceased to exist following the 2001 local government ordinance, but it is still referred to as a geographical convenience.

² The Nizam-e-Adl Regulation (literally, *Order of Justice*) was first planned out in February 2009 but was formally enacted April 13, 2009. The shaky truce wasn't in place a month when Pakistani forces launched an offensive on militant activity after their expansion into Buner.

³ Swat has a population of 1.75 million and an area of 5,337 square kilometers. The length of the valley is 160 km and its width is 35 km. The elevation ranges between 1,200 to 5,718 meters.

⁴ Television programs and teleplays highlighting the need for the operation were broadcast on public and private channels and radio stations.

⁵ Colloquially referred to as the Swat Operation after the main area of operations.

⁶ A 1.11 percent collateral damage to the property means roughly 1 house in every 100 was either damaged or destroyed. A 0.11 percent to life means 1 person per every 1,000 was either injured or killed. At the end of the operation, collateral damage to life and property was minimal.

⁷ The United Nations launched the Consolidated Appeal in the shape of the Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan. To date, it has received nearly \$330 million out of a total requirement of \$660 million.

⁸ The Post Crisis Need Assessment for this operation was conducted by the Asian Development Bank and World Bank in July 2009.